

Waples Pond

50.6 acres

Milton

The numbers for most gamefish species were below average in Waples Pond despite the abundance of woody structure favored by many of these fish. Moderate numbers of largemouth bass were present but few were larger than 15 inches. Although bluegill also occurred in lower numbers than average for Delaware ponds, many were nice-sized, larger than 6 inches. Growth of both species was below average. Additional gamefish species included black crappie and yellow perch. Occasional chain pickerel have been taken by persistent anglers, especially in the headwater areas of the pond.

VEGETATION

Hydrilla has dominated the pond bottom over the past decade making angling difficult during the late summer months. However, during the vegetation mapping survey of 2004, a decline in the coverage of hydrilla was observed. White waterlily was the most abundant aquatic plant in the back half of the pond, especially in the shallows. Small amounts of coontail and a little fanwort (*Cabomba*) were present in some areas with mixed bladderwort. In the portion of the pond east of Route 1, hydrilla remained the dominant plant species over the pond bottom.

Waples Pond was notable in the number and extent of rare and uncommon plant species. The “boggy” habitat in the headwater portion of the pond held many of these unusual species and will be closely monitored.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

An unimproved boat ramp is currently available on the west side of Route 1. Canoes and small boats may be carried to the water from several locations around the pond. Most small boats can float under the Route 1 Bridge that divides the pond. Waples Pond empties into Prime Hook Creek which flows through Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. This area is known for its isolated beauty and is popular with canoeists. It also has good gamefish populations, but boat movement from the pond to the creek requires a short portage. The creek and great expanse of surrounding freshwater wetlands are unique to Delaware.



WAPLES POND

